



Eighteen - Temptation

While Dhare spent the next few hours at the control panel, Ashaki went through one of his storage bins. Every time she took a peek at him, she would see he was still engrossed in reading the scrolling red alien text on the view-screen. Images of a brown and black Yautja popped up occasionally. Seeing that Yautja sent a shiver down her spine every time she saw him. Ashaki remembered how close she came to dying at another's hands. It was enough of a jolt each time to have her immediately return to rummaging through one of the many storage bins in the cockpit.

The alien had a lot of stuff crammed away. Several bins were full of different mechanical parts she couldn't identify. She assumed for ship repair. Several more were wires and electrical components for likely the same purpose. But they got stranger, too. One bin had a single roll of what appeared to be tape next to a greasy alien wrench and an apple core. Another was a box of living glow worms in individual boxes carefully stacked together. Other bins were full of tools, fabric, batteries, and older tech. Her current one was full of...items that piqued her interest.

In the bins were chains...many chains. They were all different sizes. Some she could pick up with ease while others were huge and much too heavy to lift...not even with two hands. Hidden near the bottom were braided ropes and a large pair of handcuffs that were one hunk of metal with shackles big enough for a Yautja on both ends. She hadn't taken Dhare for being kinky.

Thoughts flitted across her mind, unbidden, of what it might be like to have Dhare restrain her and pound the daylight's out of her. He certainly seemed the type who would enjoy it. The alien asshole was a dominating creature and so she came to the conclusion that he would enjoy bondage. She wondered if he'd like Shibari...

"Do you mind?" Dhare's gruff voice growled from across the room, prompting her to look up.

He had turned his seat around to glare at her. His long legs fell forward, swaying back and forth with what must've been an abrupt turn on his part. A low chuckle his mouth as his mandibles fidgeted. "Mind what?" She cocked an eyebrow in question and stopped mid-motion of digging through the box of chains.

He gave her an irritated glare and said, "I am busy with work. If you are going to flood the space with your musk, I can not focus."

"My what?"

"Your musk! Your mating musk. I can smell your desire for rutting from here!" Dhare chuckled again. One of his hands curled in a tight fist.

Oh--ohhhhhh! Blegh! How embarrassing!

"You...can't smell that?" Her heart skipped a beat and her pulse sped up to a quick pace.

That new part of her that liked him found it pleasing that he found her distracting. This was a good sign, even if she still tried to deny her blossoming feelings.

The Yautja smirked, a low trill escaping his throat.

"Seri? I can. I have smelled it every time."

"Why haven't you said that before? That's...inconvenient..." Heat flooded Ashaki's face and she averted her eyes. She kept her eyes on the items in the box when she asked her next question.

"Perhaps I find the smell...alluring," he purred.

Ashaki faked a cough before changing the subject to something else, ignoring the sensual tightening of her loins. The situation was made worse by knowing that Dhare could smell her. The chains in question are a great segue, she thought.

"What's all this for? I didn't take you for the kinky type." She teased, holding up one of the lighter chains.

A rumble reverberated into her chest as he chuckled.

"Components that are necessary for my work."

"Your work? As in using Shibari on a sexual partner?"

"I do not know what that is. I use those for binding. It's just that must be captured alive, such as this one I have recently been studying." He gestured with a clawed finger at the data-filled screen. "What is... Shibari?"

It was her turn to smirk. She gathered the rope in one hand and approached Dhare, "It's better if I demonstrate it for you. Can I...borrow your arms?"

Ashaki wanted to push the limits of her friendship with Dhare. How would he react if she were to talk dirty?

Her hip jolted out while she coiled the rope, playfully devious intent plastered on her face.

Dhare clicked in apprehension before extending his arms out to her, side by side. A small mischievous giggle left her mouth as she wrapped his arms together with the rope. He watched her like a hawk with that predatory gaze she had grown accustomed to, his mandibles tight over his inner mouth. A pleasant shiver ran down her spine and blossomed into a mild heat in a lover's hot belly.

From his wrists to his elbows, she wove the rope in a braided pattern that stretched between his arms. She tugged on the last knot where she looped it for easy release, testing the strength of her work.

Of course, she could never hope to restrain the massive Yautja, but she could try. Even though she liked being the one that was tied up, it did fill her with some sick satisfaction to see him in that position.

He was always the one in charge, leading them across the universe, bouncing from one planet to the next--guiding them wherever he wanted. Ashaki was still his captive, but somewhere along the way it didn't feel like that anymore. As her hands made contact with his rough scaled skin, she could feel the air size between them.

She stepped back to appraise her work, a smile on her face. "That's Shibari."

"This is a...interesting restraining technique." He raised his arms to inspect the criss-crossing rope that restricted his movement.

"It's Japanese rope bondage. It originated on Earth. Shibari once was employed in meditation and relaxation, but nowadays it's mostly involved with sex."

Dhare's yellow eyes became pools of molten gold as his gaze slid up to her. "Sex?"

Ashaki nodded, leaning towards him.

"Mhm. One partner will tie up the other in various positions and have sex. It's...kinky." Her voice lowered ever so slightly. She added a little honey to her words as Dhare stared into her very soul.

He regarded her with a burning gold gaze, a sultry purr rumbling to life in his chest.

"And which way do you prefer? To be someone or to be tied?"

Ashaki yanked at the end of the rope, pulling Dhare's arms free as her pretty design fell away in his lap. She snickered.

"I prefer to be tied...but I don't go easy." She winked and turned to leave the room, collecting her basket.

Before she left, she stopped and met his eyes again, a playful smile on her face.

"Enjoy work, big boy," she purred, putting an extra sway in her hips until she left his sight.

Dhare had to force himself to concentrate after her encounter with Ashaki. She had been flirtatious while smelling of arousal, and he...craved more.

Damn woman...

Kayana was out to punish him? Perhaps it was his propensity for rutting, the rutting. He did thoroughly enjoy the benefits that came with his status...A bit too much, he would admit.

A good sparring was in order to get his mind back on track. It always helped him focus. He cleared the screen with a swipe of his hand and left for the kehrte. Too many days had passed since he had trained. Being stuck in that hut hadn't helped at all. Before she had reached their next destination and foe, he would have to be ready for whatever came his way.

The next few hours sped by as Dhare pushed himself to the limit in the kehrte. He took on four hologram opponents at once, weaving and diving with centuries of muscle memory guiding him through the necessary motions. Despite being computer programs, he could feel their attacks. Every blow hurt and it helped to keep him in the zone.

When he felt he had further sharpened his fighting techniques, he moved on to lifting weights. He picked up one of them out of a storage bin that popped out from the wall with a tap. It was a simple disk-shaped object that had a data pad built in; this data pad allowed internal gravity drives to make the object heavier or lighter depending on the commands he prompted. He set it to the heaviest amount. Five hundred and forty-four kilos, but back to the spinning mat and he left it up and down above him. His hips bulged and strained with each lift, a searing burn grew in his muscles as his workout progressed.

If he were a lesser male, he would've quit for the day but he loved the pain. It reminded him that his muscles could still tire. He still had room to improve. His intense workout also allowed those carnal thoughts of Ashaki to fade into the background. When the weight resurfaced, he'd hiss in frustration and push himself harder, faster.

Dhare was so intensely focused that he missed the door whispering open. The familiar, addicting, sage scent which sensually wrapped around his senses, was what coaxed him aware. Sensing it in the air, he set the weight aside and rolled to his feet in one swift motion.

He panted, his body buzzing with the high of training. The muscles in his mandibles twitched and flexed as he drank in the sight of his favorite human a few paces away. She clutched a steaming bowl of something brown and aromatic.

Whatever it was, it smelled amazing and he stepped forward to get a better whiff of it. As he towered over her, his eyes were drawn to her bountiful mammaries displayed like plush pillows in her low-cut top. His hands itched to rip open that bandeau with his claws and see how so her body really was, to feel her so fully roll in his hands.

"Hey, you, my eyes are up here." She fanned her throat and gestured with a finger to look up.

He snapped from the filthy images that filled his mind and focused on her beautiful, alien face.

"My apologies. I was admiring the view."

Dhare couldn't find it within himself to be upset that she had barged in while he was training. She was beautiful in the blue wrap and bandeau the yautja females of the village had gifted her. The color highlighted her brown skin and elevated her curves. His throat thrummed with excitement. The woman clouding his thoughts had come to him willingly...and bearing multiple gifts.

It didn't escape his notice that she was admiring the view of him as well, her pink tongue sliding across her plump lips. He pu ed his chest out a bit, to make himself larger in appearance, and he was blessed with the heady scent of her nectar.

"I...uhh...come with lunch!" Ashaki smiled, her golden-brown eyes twinkling under the bright lights of the kehrte.

His gaze fell to the metal bowl she held up for him. She passed it to his hands carefully and he tasted the aroma with his tongue cautiously.

A pleased purr rumbled to life in his chest and he followed her out of the kehrte and into the kitchen. "I figured you'd want something to eat. It's a stew made of that meat you like so much. I tossed in some alien roots and those vegetables from the pantry. The leftovers are in the fridge if you want more."

Dhare sat at the table and accepted an eating scoop from Ashaki. It was a thoughtful gesture that he hadn't anticipated. He was so caught up in carnal thoughts that he hadn't considered yet how kind she was.

Plus the food was delicious!

The little human had added in diced portions of his favorite root vegetables, ruskul, and others he kept stocked. She sat across from him eating her own portion, her human spoon in hand.

"Thank you, Ashaki." Dhare finished off the bowl with a contented purr. "I see why you trained to be a cook."

With a smile, Ashaki took the empty bowl and put it in the cleaning unit with hers.

"You're welcome." She turned back to him and joined him at the table, her fists propping up her chin.

"Did you get to find out about your next guy to kill?"

He nodded, "I have to bring them in alive, if possible." Curiosity mixed with worry on her face.

"How are you going to do that? Tie him up like you did me when we first met?"

A pang of regret shot through his chest. It was an innocent question but it reminded him of the difficult start of their relationship. So much had changed between them since then. Still, he had his answer.

"No. There is a room where I put criminals into cryogenic sleep. They will not cause us harm there. I must bring them home where they will be brought to justice under Yautja laws." He explained, tensing slightly when Ashaki idly touched and explored his claws.

She looked up from her exploring.

"What did this one do? Why run?"

There were many reasons why Ic'j'tsyan, but he couldn't condense it into an easy explanation. This one's crimes weren't as egregious as the Ic'j'ithe had saved her life from, but he still needed to face his crimes. Bringing in a Yautja alive was a challenge that he liked.

"The simple answer is cowardice. This is a woman you trait among the Yautja society. My clan is less traditional in some aspects, but it is still looked down upon." He went on, watching as she continued to poke and play with his claws. "He intervened in another's hunt and claimed the victory as his. This is against our Code of Honor."

"Code of Honor?"

"Seri? There is a list of sacred laws that no Yautja is to break or they relinquish their honor and forfeit the favor of the gods."

Her eyes were on him now, taking in every word he said, leaning closer.

"You're polytheistic? That's pretty cool."

"We have many gods. Do you have any?" He was curious to know if she had her own belief system such as his. It was a relatively new thing he wanted to know about her, among many others.

Ashaki screwed up her mouth and shook her head.

"No. Most humans aren't religious and neither am I." Shadows danced across her eyes as she cast them to the side. "On LV-318 I tried praying to the old Christian god, hoping for a miracle, only to be reminded that miracles don't exist."

"Miracles come in different ways. The gods of the Yautja are equal to us. We do not beg from our gods nor do we fall to our knees like humans used to. They strengthen us with their tales of strength and cunning." Dhare remembered some of the old stories his sire Bhage had told him as a young pup, his young self enthralled.

A small smile curved Ashaki's lips, "I like that. I can see how inspiring that could be. I really liked your story about Marakhen."

Something in his chest warmed, like the rising sun greeting a new day. She had remembered his tale...and liked it! Once upon a time, he had thought humans were silly and weird, though that was still true for most humans, but since meeting Ashaki that opinion had changed...evolved. Did she enjoy his company as much as he did hers?

"There are many more to tell." One in particular he really wanted to relate to her. It was the tale of how Pava and Cetanu became lie-mates.

As he cleared his throat to begin, the ship lurched violently. A boom thrummed through the corridors, and the entire vessel swayed port side. Klaxons fired up. Around them, the lights turned red as the ship put itself in high alert.

"Proximity Alert. Unknown vessel. Registration number 06491-VX." The ship's AI announced. It was a robotic voice speaking Yautja.

Ashaki shrunk in her chair as Dhare shot to his feet.

"What was that? Did we hit something?" She yelled over the alarms.

"Ashaki, come! Join me in the cockpit. We are under attack. He tugged her from the chair a little too strong and she stumbled to her knees briefly before jogging alongside him.

"Apologies." For his rough handling as he raced from the room.

As soon as he was in the cockpit he directed her to sit in a seat, his safety harness folding down and locking her in it. He set in his own, activating the harness, and turning off autopilot. His hands took control and he immediately whipped a hard one-eighty to avoid an incoming bogey.

With the tap of a button, he projected the radar onto the viewscreen and fired retaliatory shots, bolts of blue plasma making contact with their pursuer. From the visuals, he noted that the ship was Yautja, but he was unable to make out which clan it belonged to from the lack of legible markings on the side. The complex acrobatics were baffling them in his vision.

Dhare growled in his throat as he turned the ship into an incoming asteroid field.

The audacity to fire upon an Arbitrator! It was such a dishonorable and ignorant move from his attacker.

Not to mention the precious cargo who sat in her seat, shaking like a pup. She whimpered when one more shot hit his ship before he whistled the shields.

"Who is it?" Ashaki asked when he disengaged the alarm.

"A 's'yutted' Yautja."

He masterfully weaved and wove through the treacherous asteroid field, his ship coming almost too close for comfort to some. Sweeping around a massive asteroid, he fired a series of plasma charges at his pursuer, his radar confirming the hits. His intent was on either losing them or outright destroying them.

"Computer, scan the enemy ship and give me all of the available data on it. I want to know the clan and origin of this vessel. I speak to know who this coward is!" Dhare ordered his onboard AI, weaving rapidly fire commands.

Immediately, a red rectangular bar started to fill in the lower right screen, filling with the found data, as he jerked back on the controls to avoid colliding with a cluster of space rocks.

"Dhare! Watch out for that--!" cried Ashaki.

He avoided collision with another rock that had come from his blind spot.

"Kiri'ce!" Dhare snarled, just a little too harshly, as he actively shutting her up.

He couldn't afford the distraction. Not at this time when he needed laser focus.

Both of their lives were at stake!

The ship jumped and rocked when plasma from his pursuer came into contact with the D'Exshield. He was glad he had installed on his visit with the Cracked Skull clan aboard their ship. That shield protected them both each with their own projectiles killing blows spread out upon impact. It was too thick to penetrate.

The data bar finally hit one-hundred percent and appeared on the opposite side of his screen, providing the information about his current enemy.

A 'cl'iton the run.

This information was all he needed to know that he could use excessive force. The cowardly male would meet Cetanu by his hand.

Dhare's ship shook and rattled when an asteroid made contact with his shield, knocking the controls to the starboard side. He nudged and fired static bolts at his enemy as he looped around a space rock. They were now in pursuit of their attacker. Using clinical precision he locked onto the foreign ship and fired a trio of plasma shots. The bright blue balls of light zoomed through a cluster of asteroids, landing right on target.

He could see their propulsion drives sputtering out upon impact, the bright blue streaks of ion dying out.

"Enemy vessel putting out zero power! Zapped the ship's AI.

"Send my information and recording of this encounter to the 'cl'it's clan. I will be his executioner."

"Affirmative," confirmed the AI.

Dhare typed a command into the system and fired a line that attached itself to the 'cl'it's vessel. From there he hunted the enemy ship behind his own until he was clear of the asteroid field. The tug attracted in itself until his ship was connected with the other, the as a signal one another. Another command returned the tunnel for interstellar connections for safe passage from one ship to another.

He rose from the pilot seat, activating the autopilot to continue their course.

"Ashaki, stay in the eatery while I am dispatching this 'cl'it's. I tapped the release on her restraints and made way to his armory.

Upon donning his 'zava'ata he strode to the connected tunnel. He jerked a finger towards the hall, directing Ashaki to leave the room immediately. It was more for her safety than his. He was home bound at this point to protect her. She disappeared and he extended his wristblades, anticipating a possible attack upon opening his end of the tunnel.

Releasing a deep breath, he activated the door. Fog billowed in across the floor from the dark tunnel. Red lights and klaxons could be seen from inside the other ship as he crept forward, his body tense for an attack.

He could see no immediate heat signatures and continued forward. As he met the middle of the tunnel, the silhouettes of a Yautja faded in from near the ship's doors and stomped forward.

Dhare slid to the side with a meaty fist aiming for his ribs. He retaliated with a sweeping kick, knocking his opponent o his feet. Their own wrist blades scraped along the armor at his thigh while they scrambled to their feet.

The 'cl'it'was smaller in stature and thus easier to knock down with a powerful kick to the abdomen. Unlike Dhare, he wore no armor.

Loudly his opponent roared when Dhare buried his wrist blades into the exposed belly, his biceps bulged as he lifted him high above, letting the blades cut through the 'cl'it's sinuses as he gutted him with the upward motion.

Bright fluorescent green blood dribbled down the floor as Dhare jerked his arm up to further dismembered the 'cl'it's. It made him reconsider his life but he had only killed himself faster.

"When you greet Cetanu, tell him an Arbitrator sent you. He will know of the dishonorable life you have led," hissed Dhare as he retracted his blades, letting the 'cl'it'fall to the ground in a pool of his own blood.

In the thermal vision Dhare used, he saw how the heat of blood mingled with the cooling of his dying attacker. As he stood there an idea popped into his mind, a wicked smirk spreading his mandibles beneath his bio-mask.

"Actually, I have a better end for you, Bad Blood." Dhare attached a coil to the 'cl'it's ankle and dragged him back through the tunnel, kicking him into his own ship.

"Computer, lock his ship's mainframe and initiate a sequence to self-destruct in thirty minutes' time." He called out as he shut the bay door, retracting the tunnel with another command into the data pad.

"Set that ship to drift into the asteroid field upon completion of detachment."

The AI issued an "Affirmative" and immediately the ship shook as the tunnel severed. Dhare eyed his dying opponent, watching him clutch his abdomen in an effort to prevent his guts from falling out. He switched to his normal vision to see the blood contrast against the ruddy skin of the 'cl'it'.

Chugging sofly, he dragged him by the ankle down the hall. The door to the kitchen slid open to reveal a pacing Ashaki, who stopped upon seeing him fill the doorway covered in blood.

"Holy shit! Dhare! Are you okay? Did you get him?" She rattled off questions, fear contorting her face.

Without another moment wasted he crossed the door and pulled her against his chest, purring to calm her down. He pulled away to lift her chin with a bloodied claw, "All is well. I bring you a gift."

Ashaki's eyes finally landed upon the grunting Yautja by the door. Her eyes widened as he dragged the dying male across the room until he brought him to his knees before her. The wounded Yautja keened, tightening his weakening hold on his abdomen. Beady orange eyes, blazing like twin suns, glared up at Dhare.

"You attack me and my female." Dhare growled in Yautja. "She will end your miserable existence. It is the fact that she was unharmed that I grant you this mercy."

"Dhare...why is he here, Dhare?"

Dhare dug his claws into the 'cl'it's shoulder, "He is your kill, Ashaki."

"Isn't there some sort of rule against that? Killing someone from Dhare, shaking his head in the negative."

"His is yours. He attacked both of us. This is the criminal and needs to die for his transgressions." Dhare pointed a hairy knife from his grip and held it out for her, the gleaming bone handle forward. "Take this and kill him."

She hesitated for a brief moment, letting the weight of Dhare's words sink in, until her resolve steeled with a soft swallow. He deserved this. He had attacked them. She thought back to all the times she had suppressed those vindictive, vengeful thoughts and harnessed them.

She took the blade into her hand. The neon green blood pooled in her palms, but she gripped it tightly. Without another moment wasted, she buried the blade into the neck of the 'cl'it's. Her arms shook as she tried to drag it through the flesh. She could only manage a deep, furious puncture.

The 'cl'it'gargled and choked. Blood splattered from his open mouth. She yanked the blade free, dropping it when her hands became too slippery, and stepped back. They watched as the 'cl'it'bled at last, his body ruptured at their feet.

"Is he dead?" she whispered, her eyes lingering to gaze at his masked face.

He could no longer hear the heartbeat of the 'cl'it'and in his place Ashaki's sped up.

"Seri?" He confirmed.

"Good."

Ashaki kicked the corpse, clenching her shaking hands. A short puff of air left her nose in a huff.

It was over. That thirst for revenge was quenched. Their enemy lay dead at their feet. Seeing him dead filled her with relief, but it also filled her with shock at what she had done.

"Ashaki, let us clean up. All is fine now," Dhare assured, guiding her from the room and to the cleansing room.

"I killed someone...but I liked it..." she hugged herself as Dhare turned the shower on.

"You did well, Ashaki. Dealing the killing blow was the right thing to do. This does not make you less of a person." He further explained, wiping a streak of blood from Ashaki's cheek.

He adjusted the heat to be tolerable for her delicate skin while he began to strip free of his armor. Behind him, he noted she did the same. Her bare feet on the ground were loud to his sharp senses as she approached. He kept his eyes high, as he ushered her into the stream of the shower first before following. The dosing water ran the blood o their limbs. They each lathered with soap until the water ran clear. Ashaki moved her hair out of the way as she twisted and washed away what stilled of the 'cl'it'had touched her body.

Aswards, they stood front to front while a tent dried them completely. Finally, Dhare's eyes wandered, and so did hers. His mandibles spread as he drank in her scent.

In a matter of seconds, he had her pinned to the wall with her legs wrapped around his wide waist. Their heavy breaths filled the silence of the room as he nuzzled her with his forehead and gently teething her neck with his tusks. Her so gasps fanned across his skin while her musk swelled brighter into the air. Thaw hardened his cock as her hands traced his abdomen and chest.

A low groan escaped his mew.

He loved how her little hands felt against his flesh. She was so soft, so all of her was so soft, and plush. He wanted to take her and make her his.

But a niggly voice in the back of his head kept him from simply carrying her to his nest. These desires were only the flushed thrill of a successful victory over the 'cl'it'. Nothing more. He could resist, or at least, he thought...but when she ground her hips against his he almost lost it. Her hands stroked and squeezed his flesh sending shivers through his crest and down his body. It made him reconsider everything.

If only she knew the things he felt for her. The things he dared not say yet.

It was there on the tip of his tongue but Yautja were stoics in these matters. To be invested in a making outside of the quick pleasure, put him in a fragile position that must be approached intelligently. To utter something so daring, show his vulnerability for to lose...That weighed heavily on his heart. He couldn't fathom how his sire had dealt with these...emotions...these feelings...this admission

Dhare was the one who pulled away, letting her body slide down his, over his arousal, and to her own feet. He gulped in large lungfuls of air, struggling to settle his breathing. The startling realization he had come upon compressed his chest.

She gazed at him with surprise and disappointment, her golden-brown eyes shimmering in the low light. Her own chest rose and fell rapidly, the moment having pulled her in as well.

Before she could say something he escaped, gathering his armor in one arm. He ran, like a coward, storming his way to his work room to clean his 'zava'ata. Then what he needed to do to distract himself from the building emotions that waged a war within his chest.

Ashaki was becoming his ultimate weakness.

AN: Hope you enjoy :)

Continuing next part :)